american socialist monthly

Ferment in Politics
David P. Berenberg

Two Conventions—With One Line
(People's Party and Communist Party)
Gus Tyler

World Labor's Peace Dilemma
Devere Allen

Statement on Palestine
Samuel Weiss

People's Front in Diapers
Maxwell Harway

Socialists and the Coming War
James Burnham

On Reading Trotsky's Book
"The Third International After Lenin"
Haim Kantorovitch

august 1936
vol. 5 no. 6
15 cents

among our contributors

Friedrich Adler
Devere Allen
Jack Altman
Angelica Balabanoff
Ernest Sutherland Bates
Otto Bauer
M. V. Baxter
Anna Bercowitz
David P. Berenberg
Andrew J. Biemiller
Hannah M. Biemiller
Henry Black
H. N. Brailsford
Roy Burt
G. D. H. Cole
Albert Sprague Coolidge
Theodore Dan
Franz Daniel
Max Delson
Robert Delson
S. A. DeWitt
Ernest Doerfler
Harold Draper
Mary Dublin
Justus Ebert
Ernest Erber
Harold U. Faulkner
David Felix
Ben Gitlow
Elsie Gluck
Albert Goldman
James D. Graham
Edward Grove
Murray Gross
Alice Hanson
Powers Hapgood
Marvin Halvorson
Sidney Hertzberg
Daniel W. Hoan
Sidney Hook
Darlington Hoopes
Jessie Wallace Hughan
Edwin C. Johnson
A. Jugow
Haim Kantorovitch
Maynard C. Krueger
Leo Krzycki
Harry W. Laidler
Margaret Lamont
Joseph P. Lash
Harold J. Laski
David Lasser
Alfred Baker Lewis
Edward Levinson
Arthur G. McDowell
Broadus Mitchell
Reinhold Niebuhr
Kirby Page
Marceau Pivert
Paul Porter
Joel Seidman
Clarence Senior
Tucker P. Smith
Mark Starr
Rose M. Stein
George Streator
Norman Thomas
Frank N. Trager
Glen Trimble
August Tyler
Vincenzo Vacirca
John Wheelright
Herbert Zam
Jean Zyromski

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

GUS TYLER
is a member of the Editorial Staff of the Socialist Call and Director of the Debs Labor School.

SAMUEL WEISS
is a member of the Executive Committee of the Central Bureau of Jewish Socialist Branches.

MAXWELL HARWAY
is a member of the National Council of the American Youth Congress and a member of the Executive Committee of the YPSL of N. Y.

JAMES BURNHAM
is a well known Marxist writer.

american socialist monthly

Editorial Staff
David P. Berenberg
Haim Kantorovitch
Devere Allen
Andrew J. Biemiller
Roy Burt
Harry W. Laidler
Anna Bercowitz
managing editor

August, 1936
Vol. 5 No. 6

Table of Contents

Page

Ferment in Politics 2
David P. Berenberg

Two Conventions—With One Line 7
(People's Party and Communist Party)
Gus Tyler

World Labor's Peace Dilemma 11
Devere Allen

Statement on Palestine 17
Samuel Weiss

People's Front in Diapers 20
Maxwell Harway

Socialists and the Coming War 24
James Burnham

On Reading Trotsky's Book "The Third International After Lenin" 29
Haim Kantorovitch

Official theoretical organ of the Socialist Party of the U. S. of America

Published monthly at 21 East 17th Street, New York by the American Socialist Monthly

Subscription One Dollar and Fifty Cents a Year

Entered as second class matter, November 8th, 1934, at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Ferment in Politics

David P. Berenberg

IN the past year the AAA, the NRA, the Guffey Bill, in fact, all the important elements of the New Deal have been declared unconstitutional and have been eliminated. The only important act of the Roosevelt administration that has been allowed to stand is the abandonment of the gold standard, and that was found "constitutional" only because its invalidation would have caused a second crisis in the banking system far more severe than that of 1933. The undertakings of the administration that have not to date been destroyed by resort to a Supreme Court ukase—as, for example, the WPA, the Social Security Act, the TVA, and the relief program generally, have been subjected to a bitter campaign of villification and misrepresentation.

The administration has been freely called "red," "communist" and "fascist" in an effort to alienate from it the support of timid elements of the middle classes.

Marquis W. Childs in an article in *Harpers* for May, 1936, under the title "They Hate Roosevelt," has pointed out that, in spite of increased taxes, and in spite of (or perhaps because of) the regulatory efforts of the government, the capitalist class has benefited vastly by the acts of the Roosevelt regime. Its income has been greatly increased; it lives in its accustomed luxury. Its prestige and power are intact. Yet now it affects to believe that "recovery" has come in spite of, and not as a result of, the Roosevelt efforts. It has forgotten its abject panic when in 1933 it was loudly calling for Roosevelt to assume dictatorial powers. It is ashamed of its cowardice. Now that its chestnuts have been pulled from the fire, it wants to hear no more of Roosevelt.

Capital has suddenly become concerned for "liberty" and "democracy." It professes to see in the feeble regulatory devices of the administration both "Fascism" and "Communism." It utters fearful forebodings of the end of "initiative," the establishment of "paternal authoritarianism" and the weakening of the "national fibre." It sees in the limitation of business the end of "our democratic liberties." More concretely, and more honestly, it rebels against the growing burden of taxes to pay for relief. In the unbalanced budget and in the growing taxes it sees the weakness of the administration. If the masses of the petty bourgeoisie can be moved to desert Roosevelt, they reason that the capitalist interests may yet regain power. To this end they have launched the Liberty League. To this end they have seduced the 18th century mind of Al Smith. To this end they have sought for a lay figure which they might dress up in the respectable clothes of "old fashioned American democratic liberalism." They think they have found this figure in Alf (!) Landon. With unlimited money, endless dishonesty, boundless impudence and the support of three-quarters of the press, including Hearst,

they now think they have a chance to win.

In power, they will completely destroy even the wisps of regulation that survive the onslaughts of the Supreme Court. They will drive labor back to the position it occupied in 1933; if possible they will destroy the labor unions completely. They will drop the social security program. They will turn the relief problem back to the local communities, knowing from the experience of 1933 that they are not equipped to handle it. They will hammer down wage standards and destroy labor organizations. They will try to destroy the TVA. Failing in that, they will turn it over to private power companies for exploitation. They will try to restore the gold standard, so re-creating the banking crisis of 1933.

They will do these things because, being bourbons, they have learned nothing. Their nominal leadership—i.e. the Smiths, the Landons, the Vandenbergs, the Shouses, still live in the 18th century. Their real leadership — Hearst, Mellon, Morgan, Mills, and the more sinister Wall Street figures—know precisely what such a course leads to. Raising the cry of "fascist" against Roosevelt, they aim at fascism itself, under their own auspices and in their own interests.

II

The Roosevelt administration set out with no philosophy and no direction to rescue the country from the effects of the depression. If there was any underlying idea in its ventures it was that the capitalist system had to be saved, if necessary in spite of itself. If there was any method in its activities it resolved itself into a policy of spending enormously "to prime the pump."

Judging from purely superficial phenomena it has succeeded in its main objectives: for the time being capitalism has been saved. Even the "pump-priming" expenditures seem to have been justified; it is quite obvious that the improved business indices derive their major strength from direct and indirect government expenditures. What then is wrong with the picture?

Much! It is quite obvious that there must be a limit to government spending How long will the tax-payer consent to support the unemployed worker on relief? How long will the banks consent to absorb the bonds that the government must sell to raise funds? How long can inflation be postponed if taxes and credit dry up? How long can inflation be "controlled" once it is undertaken? To what extent is the government prepared to coerce the rebellious taxpayer to continue his contributions?

To satisfy the farmer the administration seeks to keep up the prices of farm products, even at the cost of destroying crop surpluses. This reacts on the city worker whose wages, or whose relief payments do not rise to keep pace with the increased cost of living. The resulting stress increases industrial friction; strikes increase in number and proportions. The government must side with either the workers or the capitalists, or remain neutral. No matter what it does, it increases the number of its enemies.

Is the Roosevelt administration for labor and against capital? Not quite. Not even the president's recent vague attack on "economic royalists" can bear this interpretation. Is it for capital and against labor? Well—not exactly. It would like labor and capital to get together, to be reasonable, to reach a peaceable agreement. But what if they cannot do so? To this the administration has no answer. It will act in any given

circumstances as expediency—in other words, as its own estimate of its security—dictates. It will so act in every crisis, whether raised by the farmers, by the elements, by labor or by the Supreme Court.

There are those who think that Roosevelt intended a modified social revolution. Mr. Wirt, of Gary School fame, thinks so. The Republican platform asserts it. The five ex-Democrats who "took a walk" take this line. But they are not alone in thinking so. There are some former socialists, some labor leaders, some college professors, who seem to believe that the NRA, the AAA, the Guffey Bill, the Securities Exchange Act, the Tugwell-Copeland Bill (which did not pass), the social security measures, the TVA augur a change in point of view equivalent to revolution. No longer shall the determining factor in legislation or in administration be the will of the wealthy and the powerful, but the needs of the masses.

It is true that the measures listed above are (or were) distasteful to the capitalist interests. It is not true that they represent a revolutionary intent. They are the typical opportunist by-products of the ancient game of politics. If Paris is worth a mass, then Washington is worth a sop to the masses. If, however, the wind veers and continuance in office depends on playing ball with Wall Street, what is easier than to arrange a "breathing spell" for business, as Roosevelt did in 1935?

It will be argued that, whatever may have been Roosevelt's intentions, the New Deal nevertheless had revolutionary implications. The Supreme Court saw those implications, and laid a heavy hand on them. The action of the Supreme Court in invalidating the NRA, the AAA and the rest, exposed the fatuity of Roosevelt's "revolution." It put up to him squarely the question: "What will you do about it?" He fumed —and did nothing. The revolution fizzled.

The Supreme Court served notice to all who played with the notion of a revolution within the limits of the law. It flatly asserted that the law exists for the protection of capital, and not for the protection of labor. It emphasized its contempt for the masses by its destruction of the state minimum wage laws. What did Roosevelt do in the circumstances? Nothing. What will his second administration do in the light of the Democratic platform and the president's acceptance speech? Nothing. The New Deal asserts its faith in the revolution within the law precisely at the moment when it becomes clear that that is impossible. The platform speaks vaguely of changes in the constitution to meet the new emergencies, but Roosevelt knows better than most that such changes now, in the face of the bitter opposition of capital, are out of the question. Only thirteen states are needed to block a constitutional amendment. Capital can to-day muster twenty states or more at a moment's notice.

What has the Roosevelt administration accomplished besides saving the capitalist system and creating a fictitious prosperity by spending the future resources of the nation?

It has failed to solve the unemployment problem. There are still ten millions or more out of work. There are still twenty millions on relief. It has fed, irregularly and at starvation levels, some of the unemployed, but in so doing it has undermined wage standards and the standard of living. It has done nothing to relieve the housing shortage or to clear the slums. It has failed to preserve civil liberties. It has permitted the rise of a sinister red-

baiting campaign, with the usual accompaniment of "loyalty oaths" and the suppression of opinion.

It has failed to guarantee to the workers the right to organize. The unions that were strong before the New Deal was inaugurated may be as strong now, but in many industries there is still no organization. The NRA encouraged the formation of company unions. In the steel industry the basic question of the right to organize is now being fought out on the old lines. In the rubber and textile industries and in many others the right to organize has not been established. The total membership of the American Federation of Labor is only slightly larger than it was in 1933.

It has failed to solve the farm problem. The farmer is still beset by his debts. Farm bankruptcy and farm tenancy are on the increase. The poor farmers, the share croppers, the farm laborers have lived under a reign of terror directed against their organizations and calculated to stifle their protests against slave conditions.

III

In the circumstances it is not strange that political adventurers like Father Coughlin, Dr. Townsend, the Reverend Gerald Smith who inherited the fragments of Huey Long's movement, should think the time opportune for fishing in troubled waters. Whether the Lemke candidacy is sponsored by Hearst and the Republican Party, or not, the fact remains that the crass inflationism of the Lemke program has a a tremendous appeal, particularly in the Middle West.

With Coughlin's radio station behind it, the Lemke party will make inroads on Roosevelt's strength. Inroads great enough to defeat him? Perhaps. That is clearly what the Landon backers hope.

Before the conventions it seemed a foregone conclusion that Roosevelt would be re-elected. New factors have arisen to make the outcome doubtful. Lemke is a factor of unpredictable force. Landon is another. He is being built up cleverly as a man of the people, a common man who keeps his word, a reliable man who can stick to a budget.

There is reason to believe that not all of labor will be with the President. Lewis and his followers in the Committee for Industrial Organization are for Roosevelt. But Lewis is engaged in a life and death struggle for power with Green. If the Roosevelt administration backs Lewis it may lose the support of Green. If it remains neutral it gambles with the support of Lewis. It is a serious dilemma, since without labor, victory in key states like Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois becomes doubtful.

IV

The position of the Communist Party in the tangled political situation is worthy of consideration. The immediate aim of the Communist Party is not the seizure of power, but the preservation of bourgeois democracy against the encroachments of fascism. As the Communist Party sees the situation, fascism is represented by Landon, the Republican Party, Coughlin and Hearst. Roosevelt is cast in the role of preserver of democracy. The Communist Party, failing the victory of Earl Browder or of Norman Thomas, must desire the victory of Roosevelt. It is therefore in the anomolous position of saying to the workers: *Vote for Browder,* but if you cannot bring yourself to do that, *vote for Roosevelt.*

The most curious political development in this year of strange happenings

is the rapprochment between the communists and the former Old Guard of the Socialist Party. At a conference at Camp Tamiment, and on several other occasions, Louis Waldman more than once hinted that he would support Roosevelt. In this he has been preceded by David Dubinsky, a former member of the Socialist Party, and by Sidney Hillman, never a member of the party, but always in the orbit of the *Forward*.

How this unforseen and unwanted united front of Waldman and Browder will work out no one can foretell. Both sides tacitly ignore each other as yet. Whether they can continue to play the ostrich game since the dearest wish of both groups is the formation of a Labor Party is another question.

V

By contrast to the confusion evidenced by the Old Guard and by the Communist Party, the course taken by the Socialist Party is clarity itself. As in 1912, when the ultra-revolutionists went over to the elder Roosevelt, and as in 1916, when Wilson was the lure that won over many "radicals" who "wanted something now," the Socialist Party holds firmly to its class philosophy. It does not conceive of Roosevelt as the bulwark against fascism, but rather as the representative of the petty bourgeoisie to whom fascism will not be repugnant if something is to be gained by it. Roosevelt's continuance in power offers the workers and the farmers nothing more than they have had in the last three years. It offers even less, since a Roosevelt with nothing left to attain will revert to form, drop his spectacular opportunism, and seek to win favor with his class by giving them a "safe and sane" administration. Socialists do not think of Roosevelt and the Democratic Party as essentially different from Landon and the Republican Party. Reaction under Landon may be more stupid and more aggressive than reaction under Roosevelt. Even so much is not certain, as those who recall the reaction under the "liberal" Wilson can testify. In any case, it is not part of a socialist's duty to support the "lesser evil." The folly of such a course has been sufficiently demonstrated by the experience of the working class in Germany and Austria.

The Socialist Party offers as against Roosevelt's opportunism, Landon's reaction, Lemke's inflation and Browder's slavery to the "new line," a clear cut socialist program based on the interests of the working class. Whether in the coming melee it emerges with a vote increased or a vote lessened, it will surely gain when the political horizon clears. In the coming campaign the political class lines are sure to be sharpened. The strategy of the Republicans, of Hearst, or Lemke will compel the workers to think in terms of class. Roosevelt, in defense of his position, will seek to gloss over the class nature of the political struggle. He will seek to be the candidate of "all the people," and so will unmask himself to many on the threshhold of class consciousness. Whether he is elected or not, many workers and farmers, fed up with his straddling, will be forced to consider independent political action. Then the wisdom of the socialist position will be vindicated.

The ASM assumes no responsibility for signed articles. Such articles express the opinion of the writers. The ASM strives to serve as a free forum for all shades of opinion within our movement.

Two Conventions - With One Line

(People's Party and Communist Party)

Gus Tyler

OUTKAUTSKYING Kautsky, Earl Browder officially consummated the struggle for the debolshevization of the Communist Party at the ninth convention as he ended his keynote address with the slogan: *"through liberty to Socialism."*

"Even before the convention opened you felt that something big was going to happen," says Joseph Freeman in his "official" write-up in *The New Masses.* "Something big" is whimsical understatement; it was enormity itself made large with inflation. It was unbelievable that the pet slogan of reformism: through democracy to Socialism, inflated and exaggerated into: through liberty to Socialism, would cause a communist convention hall to "rock with applause and cheers" and precipitate a "stormy ovation that lasted twenty minutes."

What did happen at the Communist Convention? Put simply: Kautsky defeated Lenin—without a struggle and without a dissenting voice.

And while this happened, a handful of old reformist socialists, conferring somewhere in the Pocono Mountains were preparing the groundwork for a People's Party, quite unaware of the fact that the Communist Party had stolen both their thunder and their lightning.

In the closing days of June 1936 political twins were born: a new communist and a new socialist party, mothered by a radical past, sired by Roosevelt, and god-fathered by Eduard Bernstein.

* * *

Both the Communist Party and the People's Party (the name for the Social-Democratic Federation in New York State) met for the same purpose: to run a third party campaign in order to elect one of the two major capitalist party candidates; namely, Roosevelt. Both parties deny it. If they did not, they would be worthless to Roosevelt. In fact, if the C. P. did not deny it often enough it might actually defeat Roosevelt by its endorsement.

The New Leader, July 11, denies that "Chairman Waldman has officially endorsed Roosevelt." 'Tis a rumor from the "poison vats of Norman Thomas," they shriek. Earl Browder, with that benign stolidity of the present communist bureaucracy, merely affirms with pontifical solemnity that the C. P. does not support Roosevelt. The only difference between these two is that *The New Leader* speaks with the foam on its tongue while Browder buries his tongue far in his cheek before a gaping rank and file. What is the truth?

Browder put it quite bluntly at the convention: "The Communist Party fully agrees with the labor and progressive forces supporting Roosevelt, that the victory of Landon and Knox, the creatures of Hearst, would be a major misfortune for the American peo-

ple. We call for their defeat at all costs." This is the gentle sport of affirmation by double negation. Cancelling through negatives we can state it affirmatively: "Roosevelt, the creature of Garner, Robinson, Horner, and McNutt, must be reelected at all costs."

When Browder wants something he wants it "at all costs." The enemy class knows it; Comrade Browder is a poor tradesman who comes to the market announcing the unlimited sum he is willing to pay; he will pay it, no fear!

When, at a press conference some weeks before the convention, I asked Browder whether the C. P. would advise vacillating workers to vote for Roosevelt, his answer was that the "Communist Party would not conduct such a campaign as to turn Roosevelt voters in the direction of Landon." But Browder must have known that this was no adequate answer since it fails to tell us whether the C. P. would turn Landon voters over to Roosevelt. To make absolutely certain that his members would comprehend, Browder elaborated at the convention: "We declare that Landon is the chief enemy, do everything to shift the masses away from voting for him, even though we can not win their votes for the Communist Party, even though the result is that they vote for Roosevelt." This is paying, and paying heavily.

The Old Guard, in convention assembled, has seconded the motions of the C. P. The only difference is that while the C. P. comes to Roosevelt by bouncing back from Landon, Louis Waldman enters the camp of Roosevelt gleefully clinging to the clumsily fitted coat tails of the Labor Non-Partisan League.

When a motion was introduced at the People's Party convention to set up a state labor party together with the unions in the Labor Non-Partisan League, Gus Gerber moved an amendment which "provided that the party should not endorse any Democratic or Republican candidate." Waldman attacked this amendment pointing out that "it was a matter of public knowledge that the trade unions had endorsed the candidacy of President Roosevelt and that therefore it was obvious that the endorsement for the Democratic presidenial candidate would be a condition exacted by the unions for the formation of a labor party in the state. To favor a labor party this year and at the same time demand the right to name a presidential ticket, as provided by the Gerber amendment, was, he said, an attempt to confuse and evade the issue."

This paragraph comes from the same issue of *The New Leader* which so hotly denies the endorsement of Roosevelt. Perhaps they were angry because someone called it an *"official"* endorsement. It really is an unofficial endorsement, as unofficial as Browder's is illegitimate. The flirtation between Moscow and Roosevelt, on the one hand, and between the unions and Roosevelt, on the other, has not only given us these misshapen children but has begotten them out of wedlock.

* * *

Many who notice the similarity of the C. P. and P. P. lines in this election nod their heads sagely and proclaim: "Extremes do meet." Yes, extremes do meet. But this is not a meeting of extremes. This is not the closing of the circle. These are parallel lines.

The basic proposition of reformist Socialism, the central issue in the debate between reformists and revolutionaries, is not the problem of violence but the nature of the state. Reformist Socialism does not recognize such a thing as class democracy; it only recognizes simple, plain, pure democracy. Such democracy

may be tainted; if so, the working class ought to rub it clean. And such a clean honest democracy is the necessary and sufficient basis for the legal capture of political power by the workers.

The whole falsity of the democratic structure was never revealed. Democracy, i.e., the popularly controlled processes of government, was presented as the essential structure of the state. The reformists did not attempt to tear down this ever newly painted facade of the capitalist state in order to reveal the worm-ridden inner structure, the capitalist-ridden bureaucracy and armed forces, the financially controlled decisive positions. But by identifying parliamentary numbers with state control they created the unhappy illusion that an electoral victory meant actual victory.

But never did reformist Socialism state this proposition in so crass and un-Marxian a manner as does Earl Browder. In the new historical manner of the C. P. Browder demands: "Restore control of the government to representatives of the people's organizations through a broad people's front." Browder's history sounds like a 5B grammar school version. "Restore!" "Restore," as of what date, Comrade? And if we can "restore" government to representatives of the people's organizations, what need for all this nonsense about revolutionary overthrow, proletarian dictatorship, and soviets?

The slogan of the convention was: "Communism is 20th Century Americanism." The converse is more accurate. "Americanism is 20th Century Communism." America—the land without classes. America—the land without slaves. This America—of which we have sung in the schools of capitalism but of which naught is seen in the sweat shops of this country—is the Browderian concept. Were it not but for that wicked Supreme Court which usurped the "control of government" from the "representatives of the people's organizations," the "people" would rule.

So—down with the Supreme Court, and—up with Comrade George Washington! Conquer "liberty"—under capitalism, and with "liberty" conquer capitalism. Set logic on its head and Marx revolving in his grave. Socialism is no longer a necessary prerequisite for liberty. For Pippa Passes . . . all is well with the world . . . and we shall have a "free, happy, and prosperous America"—all under capitalism.

* * *

Seriously, what I do not understand, after the ninth convention, is what attractiveness the C. P. thinks there will be in the socialist ideal when capitalism can be made up to look so pretty—so pretty and so much easier to get. The Communist Party platform, after enumerating its demands, states: "These demands can be won even under the present capitalist system." Well let us see what capitalism, as the C. P. dolls it up, will look like.

The government shall "open the closed factories . . . if the employers will not or can not do so, the government must open and operate the factories, mills and mines for the benefit of the people." With a stroke of Browder's pen, unemployment is practically wiped out—under capitalism. But: the government will give "every working man and woman a real, American standard of living, with a minimum annual wage guaranteed by law." By another deft turn of the hand, Browder magically ends hunger and starvation—under capitalism. Plenty we shall get! And liberty too! And, finally, if the American government promises to listen to Browder and cooperate with the League of Nations we shall also "keep war out of

the world"—under capitalism.

* * *

Inspired with the inexhaustible plenty that might be drawn from the magical cornucopia of a "wisely run" capitalism, the fear of reformist Socialism has always been that the democratic means of regulating the system and guiding it along well managed lines might be destroyed. Starting from the assumption that capitalism could be progressively developed and expanded, by degrees, into a socialist society, reformism fails to understand that the crisis, wars and fascism are an *inherent* phase of capitalism in decline. Failing to see that there is no hope in a revivified capitalism, either in the economic or parliamentary sphere, they do not counterpose Socialism to reaction but, clinging tenaciously to the present, they seek to preserve it by compromising with it, by defending it, by making it their sole sphere of operation.

This is reformism: this is the theory of the "lesser evil;" this is the motive force behind Waldman's endorsement and the unions' endorsements of Roosevelt; and this is the fundamental error of the C. P. when it states: "The direct issue of the 1936 elections is not Socialism or capitalism, but rather democracy or fascism."

In every capitalist country the issue sooner or later is democracy or fascism, because history places the decisive choice of power before the capitalist class and the working class. If capital continues to rule, we shall have fascism. If the workers take power, we shall have democracy. The issue of democracy or fascism is identical with the problem of Socialism or capitalism. And those who confuse, obscure, or fail to understand by posing the problem as one of two choices within capitalism surrender the battle before it has begun.

And all this goes under the heading of: maneuver.

Waldman is going to maneuver labor over to Socialism; and labor is going to maneuver Roosevelt over to the working class; and Roosevelt is going to maneuver the Supreme Court into declaring itself unconstitutional. In the end, labor will have won over Waldman; Roosevelt will have won over labor; and capitalism will have taken over the entire business.

The Communist Party also maneuvers. It is going to start a campaign, crying: every day in every way capitalism is getting better and better, until one day capitalism shall improve itself into Socialism.

The omnipotence of the maneuver is always the psychologic compensation for the impotence of one's policy. Bureaucratic machinations are substituted for hard work; alliances with the enemy take the place of difficult struggle; momentary successes are won at the expense of future power.

And while the bureaucrats maneuver, the masses look to them for leadership. What the maneuverers propose cynically, in order to outwit the capitalist class, the masses take seriously. The result is that the masses are outwitted and not the capitalists.

In this year 1936, we have something to tell the masses. Capitalism is deathly sick and will never recover. The working class can only get plenty, peace and freedom in a socialist society. The *liberation* of the working class is the task of the working class itself. Build and support the Socialist Party, the class party of labor.

Elementary? Yes! But it is about just such elementary things that the Socialist Party will have to fight against the People's Party and the Communist Party in the present campaign.

World Labor's Peace Dilemma

Devere Allen

IN a provincial hamlet of the Maritime Alps in France, the main square boasts an elm tree planted more than three hundred years ago by the Duke of Sully, mentor of Henry of Navarre, about the same time he was achieving renown as the originator of a scheme for a League of Nations. The little town of Ramatuelle affords an allegory which reminds us of Geneva's League; for the elm, while still alive, is bent and broken by the mistral, a sorry memorial to a grandiose plan.

So is it with the League which spokesmen said would be a dead institution last fall should Mussolini have his way in Ethiopia, and which recently with what dignity it can muster, has been assuring Mussolini that he can have his way though the League is positively not going to apologize for calling him a violator of the Covenant. Optimists in plenty, from Professor Shotwell to Captain Anthony Eden, are busily seeking to reconstruct the pieces; but the isolationists have taken new heart, the professional League proponents are in rout, and those who have cautiously hoped the League would survive its own ineptitude have seen their worst fears justified.

Superficially, the weakness of the League lay in the fact that its governments were not truly international in spirit; many of them were dictatorships or virtual dictatorships; most were subservient to reactionary interests in domestic affairs as well as foreign.

But back of all exterior reasons for the Italian defiance in Africa, the Japanese recalcitrance in Asia, and the German challenge in the Rhineland lie a series of "necessities" or "imperatives" which have their roots in economic and political motives not always readily perceived by those who emphasize the legalistic aspect of international affairs.

One major reason for the collapse of the League was its inability to provide any peaceable means for changing the status quo. Every generous impulse, every realistic compromise, of the wartime victors has been brought into play too late. Yet not sheer selfishness, as the moralist would have it, produced the Allies' stubbornness, nor was it merely the flood tide of nationalist psychology.

It is doubtless true that France's desire to excuse the Italian invasion of Ethiopia was based on the need of a future ally against Hitler; but there was more to it than that. The French could hardly fail to feel a brotherly sympathy for the ambitions of Il Duce; French capitalism, above all, is eminently practical about such matters.

The British, meanwhile, having agreed in 1925 to partition Abyssinia between Italy and Britain if they could ever get away with it, suddenly found themselves caught vexatiously between an aroused opinion back home and the ruthless violation by Mussolini of that code of honor which is supposed to exist even between buccaneers. With a pre-League

promptness, they dispatched their warships in great show to the Eastern Mediterranean, using first the menace of war, and second, economic pressure. Thus the imperative necessity of preserving imperialism brought Britain in the beginning perilously close to open combat with Italy; yet the same logic today compels the British, however nervous they may be regarding popular opinion behind them, to make terms with Italy, thereby proving—as Japan and Nazi Germany also have proved—that in the present set-up, League or no League, the way to change the status quo is by deliberate armed force or the threat of its employment.

At the same time, the great League powers have shown that whether or not it be their own imperialism that is at stake, imperialism is imperialism whoever wins, and it is best that all imperialists should more or less stand together.

Another major reason for the League's collapse was its inability to find a war deterrent that was not almost certain to bring war if at all effective. Its most unqualified supporters have insisted that it act as though it were truly international, as if it were truly disinterested, as if its member countries were truly free so that public opinion might develop, as if imperialism did not exist. If their assumptions had been sound, a genuine international police force might have long since been formed; but to act on the basis of such fantastic assumptions in the present raw state of the most rudimentary world organization was to invite catastrophe. The League's own commissions of inquiry, whose studies were summed up in a substantial document published in 1927, showed clearly that sanctions in the economic sphere were all but sure to fail, especially if the offending country had a seacoast and was contiguous to friendly or non-sanctionist neighbors, unless a blockade were imposed; and they further indicated that a blockade was almost certain to lead to war.

The question is, of course, what should now be the attitude of socialists toward the League? Shall we cheerfully let it disintegrate and go to the limbo of lost causes? Shall we return to a narrow isolationism?

The latter is inconceivable.

There are two Leagues just now, as there have always been two Leagues. One is the League to prevent war and build a world of peace; that League is in decline and as it stands can command the support of no intelligent person. There is also the League of routine international work, indispensable even if humiliatingly inadequate; that League will not be allowed to die. Through its machinery, especially the International Labor Organization, it may yet be possible to work in the days ahead for a new League that will better fill the ideals of the one so badly shattered. But how are we to go about it—by advocating the entry of the United States now, or at an early date? Only those pro-League impossibilities who criticize the war resister because there are not more of him could urge this step in a country where it is even easier to win war resisters than League backers who really mean the petitions that they sign. Let the League of Nations Association and others cease asking the government to announce the terms on which it would take us into the League (which would be to ask any Washington administration to commit political suicide) and itself formulate the outline of a really vigorous League, free from the delusion of sanctions, and a structure based on present-day realities. They will thereby better serve us all.

But for radicals this will never be enough. We know that the League of administrative routine is worth keeping alive if only for that day when the governments of the world will be so predominantly socialist that the workers will march into the corridors, sweep out hypocrisy and reaction, and build a League of Peoples. Our approach to the League of Governments, then, will be through the organized working class interests out of which that better League may some day be constructed.

If we turn to the bodies of international labor and Socialism, we find in both Internationals an obvious confusion. If the L. S. I. is hampered by the slowness of democracy, which with its meager world resources and scant integration today tends toward drift and uncertainty, the Third is hindered in many ways by the confusion of dictatorial rule from Moscow which with a strong hand on the bridle rides rapidly off in all directions. The leaders of both Internationals, who painstakingly refuse to get along with each other because of irreconcilable differences, unite wholeheartedly behind the capitalist Powers in the League. Karl Radek not long since wrote glowingly of the British Tory League policy in the London Daily Herald, and the Herald, pausing between editorials denouncing British Communism, hailed Radek as a gentleman and a scholar for having seen the great good in the aims of Eden and Laval.

This same recrudescence of brotherly love back in 1910 had united into a majority within the International those who fought down Keir Hardie, Jean Jaurès, and Edward Vaillant when these three sought to put through a resolution committing the movement to a general strike against war; and nothing so much as the defeat of this resolution paved the way for the breakdown of international Socialism in 1914. Not trusting their own judgment as much as that of capitalist governments, the working class leaders helped lead their followers like sheep to the shambles. Once more the old poison has been at work, now under the menace of fascism as then under the threat of Czarism and Absolutism. Who could have believed it possible a few years ago that the official head of the Labor and Socialist International, E. Vandervelde, would come out of Czechoslovakia bursting with public praise of universal conscription—as a safeguard, be it noted, of democracy? Or that socialist leaders in Switzerland, Holland, and elsewhere would throw their weight behind capitalist military machines, in whose control they have practically no share? Or that the Executive Committee of the L. S. I. could adopt, as it did in Brussels last October, a resolution pledging to the capitalist governments in the League the support of their working class bodies to the policies decided upon to suppress Italian agression, "whatever these may be?" Those who led the movement down this dark alley have forgotten 1914, have again become victim to the slogan about a war to end war, and have so lost themselves in hatred of fascism that they would follow a program which might or might not destroy fascism in other lands, but would certainly establish it in their own countries.

Nor can the Third International evoke any more assurance of a policy well conceived and fruitful. Not only did the Soviet Union sell its share of the oil and barley and other products which made Mussolini's pirate expedition successful —and this in conjunction with capitalist states from whose policies theirs, on this point, was indistinguishable—but the Soviet authorities resisted all cooperation in workers' sanctions against

Mussolini just as they had formerly refused it against Hitler. The unpublicized incident of the War Resisters' International and its appeal for united workers' sanctions is illuminating. When a long series of difficult negotiations had brought from the representatives of the syndicalist International Federation of Transport Workers, the International Federation of Trade Unions, and the Labor and Socialist International a halting but definite agreement to enter discussions for the consideration of joint economic action by the workers against the shipment of war goods, and further some evidence that the Communist International could be represented in the discussions for joint, if not united, action, the whole matter was dropped upon the receipt of a telegram from Moscow by the Soviet representatives in Brussels instructing them not to support workers' sanctions. This crucial decision at a crucial moment was significant in view of the twofold excuse given to the War Resisters' International by the communist spokesmen previously: namely, that the use of workers' sanctions by the Russian unions would give Italy ground for war—war, mind you, against the Soviets simultaneously with Ethiopia! — and, besides, that particularly friendly relations existed between Italy and Russia since Italy had been one of the first countries to recognize the Soviet Union! Further significance in the communist attitude may be seen in the 1936 position as contrasted to the resolution adopted by the communist-inspired Amsterdam World Congress Against War in 1932, which instructed its Permanent World Committee that

> In the event of a further intensification of the danger of war the Committee shall seize the initiative, in agreement with the anti-war committees of the various countries, to convene a new world anti-war Congress.

No such Congress was held, Mussolini's war notwithstanding. Is it possible that the suspicions of many workers against war were justified, and that when the World Congress spoke of "the danger of war" it meant exclusively "the danger of war against the Soviet Union?"

It was Radek who, at the Hague peace conference in 1922, had asserted, "We maintain that if we wish to be strong enough, the essential condition to secure that end is that the workers free themselves not only from their 'ideals' of patriotism and defense of the motherland, but also from all political association with the bourgeoisie." Today, not only are communists instructed to cooperate with bourgeois governments, but under the terms of the Franco-Soviet Pact, have been warned—long before the advent of the Blum government in France—not to weaken the imperialist French army and navy. As Kurt Hiller, former left-wing pacifist, put it, writing in von Ossietsky's paper, *Die Neue Weltbuehne,*

> If Soviet Russia now needs this alliance, her interests also demand that the states allied with her are able to accomplish something, that they are strong and powerful. Political parties which in these states undermine the military power act counter-bolshevik, act counter-revolutionary.

It may be credited by the gullible to Soviet clairvoyance that consummation of this treaty with Laval was followed so soon by the victory of the Popular Front, which will, of course, lend it a transitory glamor. It is only by a happy fortune, however, that for the time being there is no probability that Soviet conscripts will be compelled to fight outside their own land to advance the interests of French imperialists; for be it noted that the treaty, instead of lending itself to limitation by a negative vote in the League Council against any "wrong kind of war" which the Soviets might not

approve—which is the ground on which some communists have defended it—goes outside the League and pledges mutual support whether the Council acts or not.

So far, this is a critical discussion. It is fair to ask, as European socialist leaders have asked themselves, could world labor, even if ideologically prepared, have prevented the war in Africa, or any other of real substance? That query can never positively be answered. Yet, as matters stood, it is highly probable that with the best will in the world, labor was still too weak to be decisively effective. On January 1, 1932, before the collapse of the free trade unions under Hitlerism in Germany, the International Federation of Trade Unions claimed only about 13,700,000 members, and the Red (Communist) International of Labor only about 13,900,000—90 per cent of whom were in the U.S.S.R. The International Federation of Christian Trade Unions counted 1,500,000 and its connected but unaffiliated units about 900,000. The syndicalist International Workingmen's Association reported some 715,000. The Pan-American Federation of Labor contained only 3,500,000, chiefly our American Federation. Throughout these figures there is a great deal of duplication. And, be it remembered, this was before the loss of millions in Germany and Austria, not in loyalty, but in effectiveness.

Outside Europe, the Labor and Socialist International has affiliated sections only in a few places: Argentina, British Guiana, China, Palestine, and the United States. Total figures for these groups do not exceed 100,000. Even the vote-getting power of the parties in the L. S. I. has never exceeded some 26,500,000, and of the Comintern outside Russia, 6,800,000.

On the other hand, modern war has become an infinitely delicate thing. Let the tenuous thread of communications be severed, and war can no more be waged. A study of the purchasing establishments set up by armies and navies reveals how weak are the chains of present-day combat. Canada produces 89 per cent of all the world's nickel; star shells require the bark of the innocent Japanese matsumata plant; the United States produces only 17 per cent of its consumption of antimony, a war mineral of vital consequence; Great Britain produces a mere 10 per cent of its consumption of copper. Without the aid of technical workers, the carrying on of war today would be inconceivable.

So far, however, warmakers do not need to worry greatly. For beneath the present numerical weakness of world labor is a still more deadly factor. World labor has no policy on war. World labor does not yet know whether it is fighting war *and* fascism, or fighting fascism by war.

In any event, however, we have a right to ask whether there is a reasonable hope that the Internationals may learn a lesson from the folly of the sanctions episode in which they have placed themselves at the service of sufferable imperialisms in order to fight against those that are insufferable. If they can, we must inquire further whether rank-and-file socialists can function effectively to build a world organization capable of changing the status quo without war, and of applying some form of coercion, short of war, to restrain international offenders.

If events move rapidly toward a crisis involving nations of more resistance or those more blessed with true friends than Ethiopia, we can scarcely look hopefully toward world labor. If we have time, it is, perhaps, our one real hope. In many countries—more than

ever since the successful wave of political strikes in Spain and France—the workers are trained in the strike technique and can be taught the values in a strike for peace. *Evenutally they may be taught, besides, that successful invasion, even by fascists, is virtually impossible unless the invaders can count upon some measure of co-operation, willing or unwilling, from the organized workers of the invaded land; that the soundest defense, under modern conditions, is to deny aid to the aggressor, cost what it may, though it is sure to cost less, probably, in lives and social institutions than defense by war, which involves the regimentation of labor by capital. They may learn that Hitler is safest when French militarism and imperialism are robust, and Mussolini most secure when British reaction is unchallenged on its own home grounds.*

The Socialist Party of the United States, in its Declaration of Principles, committed itself in 1934 to a policy confirmed in 1936. It says, "We will unitedly seek to develop trustworthy working class instruments for the peaceable settlement of international disputes and conflicts." That should be the keynote for the peace program of American radicalism.

Practically speaking, that program will try to preserve the present skeletal structure of the League of Nations, emphasizing the International Labor Office and the World Court, if for no other reason than to cure the narrow nationalism of the American worker, who is more nationalist by far today than finance-capital or the middle class intellectuals. The promotion of regional peace agreements may, without detracting from genuine internationalism, strengthen neutrality policies by enabling a group of countries to compensate each other, through trade arrangements, for losses sustained in keeping out of war markets. Through world labor organizations, using as spokesmen the various socialist governmental delegates to international conferences, it will perhaps be possible to prepare the way for that world-wide apportionment of markets and raw materials, as well as migration of workers, which in any effective form must await the spread of Socialism to new zones.

By criticizing frankly the opportunistic compromises of world labor, but cooperating sympathetically with it something can be done, however little, to aid in the eventual development of a really socialist peace program. But the main job, after all, considered as a contribution to world peace and not as isolationism, is to develop here in the United States a movement of aggressive, class-conscious labor, aware of its economic and political unity with the workers elsewhere in the world, and determined to apply its industrial power alike to the problem of economic freedom and the problem of a warless civilization. The destruction of war and the eradication of industrial autocracy are not two questions, but fundamentally are one. This is labor's peace dilemma: whenever either is emphasized to the exclusion of the other, war and fascism gain ground and we come to the brink of collapse by the world-wide radical forces. Every step ahead, on the twofold path that points to the single objective, we strengthen the bulwarks of peace and Socialism.

READERS' FORUM

The ASM has adopted the policy of opening its pages to communications from its readers with reference to important problems in the socialist movement. It is the desire of the editors that comrades avail themselves of this opportunity. Necessarily, the length of such communications will have to be limited because of space.

Statement on the Present Situation in Palestine

(Submitted by Samuel Weiss and accepted for discussion by the Central Bureau of Jewish Socialist Branches).

THE present situation in Palestine is the result of the three-cornered conflict between Jews, Arabs and English imperialism, a conflict of some years, and one which is growing steadily more severe. The situation must be considered in the light of the historic background from which the conflict began. The main forces responsible for that conflict must be defined and an effort made toward a solution of this problem.

What are the main causes for the present situation in Palestine? It is a known fact that in 1915, the Arabic leader Hussein, conducted a lengthy correspondence with the English High Commissioner of Egypt, McMahon, in which the High Commissioner promised that if the Arabs would support England in its war against the central powers, England would in return, help to establish an Arabic State in Palestine. A similar promise was also made by the famous Lawrence of Arabia.

On the other hand, England, in order to get the cooperation of the Jews in different countries during the World War promised, and later gave, a guarantee to the Jews, through the Balfour Declaration, to the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

This Declaration completely satisfied the advocates of political Zionism, who, under the leadership of Theodore Herzl, as early as the beginning of this century, have engaged in an effort to get some kind of political charter to guarantee the Jewish claims on Palestine. In this manner, England, right from the beginning, made two contradictory promises which could not be realized peacefully. English imperialism has consciously encouraged the national aspirations of the Arab and the Jews, hoping that in the conflict between the Jews and Arabs, English Imperialism would succeed in strengthening its position in Palestine. Just as it was necessary for England to stir up hostilities between Hindus and Moslemites in India in order to strengthen and to hold its colonial interests there, so it was necessary for England to create a condition in Palestine in which English military forces would, of necessity, have to stay there. This was necessary especially, because, according to the provision of the mandate, received by England from the League of Nations, England was supposed to establish some form of real Home-Rule, which England did not wish to give.

The old Roman motto, "divide and rule" is practiced in a complete form by English Imperialism in Palestine.

In consonance with this strategy the chauvinistic impulses of the Arabs and of the Jewish masses are constantly kept at high pitch, so that at the slightest provocation the Holy Land becomes a battle-ground between Jews and Arabs.

English Imperialism finds fertile soil in the strategy of the "Effendi" and Zionsists. On the one hand, the "Effendis" have material economic ininterest in stirring a fighting spirit among the Arabian population against the Jews, in order to wipe out the class-consciousness which might take concrete form in a demand of the poor

land-less "felachs" for an agrarian reform which would satisfy their hunger for soil at the expense of the rich landowners.

The agitation against the Jews and the cementing of Pan-Arabic tendencies finds fertile soil in Zionism. Zionism, in accordance with its illusion of building a homeland for Jews in Palestine, is constantly pursuing the policy of taking over the economic positions of the native population. Zionist institutions which buy new land for new Jewish settlements are often forced to evict the poor "felachs" for whom the piece of land is often the only means of a livelihood.

The "Histadrut", an organization of Jewish industrial and field laborers, has conducted a chauvinistic campaign against the employment of Arab labor by Jewish enterprises and colonies, a systematic campaign that Jewish factory and landowners should employ exclusively, Jewish labor only.

Even though Jewish colonization creates new industries in Palestine, fills in swamp-lands, and raises the cultural standard of the population, which is to the advantage of the Arabian population, the policy of the Zionist organizations, including the "Histadrut", must however, lead to the creation of a hostile relationship between the Jewish and Arabic working masses. This relationship creates a condition in which the Arab considers the Zionist colonization and immigration a danger to his own interests.

The Arabian masses feel that the small Jewish minority, supported by hated English imperialism, is about to conquer their lands.

The tactics of Zionism, and its component sections, brought about a condition through which the Arabian ruling classes are diverting the Arabian struggle for emancipation. Instead of conducting that struggle with a clear vision of liberating themselves from English imperialism, the masses, instead of devoting their struggle against English imperialism, are directing it against the Jewish population. This struggle takes on the grotesque form of pogroms and hooligan excesses, which must be condemned by every socialist. The Arabic masses instead of being incited against the Jewish masses should be educated in the interests of mutual understanding between both nationalities instead of being stirred up against each other.

The present siuation in Palestine which finds expression in a system of terroristic acts against the Jewish population, burning of Jewish fields, uprooting of planted trees, etc., have their causes and grow out of the above mentioned relationship. Even should order be restored through negotiation or by English military force and the Arabic general strike be terminated, as long as the relationship between the Jews and the Arabs remains as it is now, without any basic change, the uprisings will constantly be repeated.

As Jews and socialists, we must at the present moment, warn against the continuation of the chauvinistic policies of the Zionists of all kinds in Palestine. Immigration to Palestine which is the result of the growing reaction in Poland and Germany must be utilized for the peaceful up-building of the land and be a constructive force for those Jews who, through economic boycott and oppression, have been driven out of these countries. In no case, should this immigration be utilized to deepen the chasm between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

Not English bayonets, but a serious understanding between the Arabian and

Jewish working masses, will make it possible for the Jewish minority in Palestine to live in peace and enjoy the fruits of its labors.

Mutual unions of Arabian and Jewish workers, both industrial and agricultural, built on the principle of class-struggle against the mutual exploiting forces, will be the best answer to the "divide and rule" policy of British imperialism and against the chauvinistic propaganda of the "Effendis" and Zionists.

The "Histadrut", as the organization of thousands of Jewish workers in Palestine will, in the interests of these masses, have to draw a line between themselves and the policies of general Zionism, and give up the illusion of building a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This illusion is not only responsible for the chauvinistic policy against the Arabians, but it is also responsible for its orientation on the Hebraic culture that makes the "Histadrut" looked upon with disfavor by the Yiddish-speaking masses in the whole world.

The Jewish problem in Palestine, just as in Poland, in Roumania and America, can only be solved through a joint struggle of the working masses in each country, against reaction, against anti-semitism and fascism and for the establishment of a socialist society. As Socialists we should basically be for:

1. Free immigration in Palestine, just as we are for such free immigration the world over.
2. Recognition of the rights of the Jewish minority in Palestine to live and enjoy all privileges that are due to a free citizen in a civilized country, including the right of the Yiddish language, just as we are for the recognition of these rights to all Jewish minorities throughout the world.
3. The creation of a form of governing autonomy, which should embrace proportional representation and should be based on democratic principles.
4. The building of a Socialist Party as the vanguard for the carrying out of Jewish and Arab working class unity.

ARTICLES TO COME

HOW SHALL WE CONDUCT OUR ELECTION CAMPAIGN? *Gus Tyler*
THE SCOPE OF MARXIAN THEORY *Sidney Hook*
THE SPANISH SITUATION
AN AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM FOR THE SOCIALIST PARTY *Paul Porter*
CAMPAIGN ISSUES *Harry W. Laidler*
THE CONSTITUTION AND THE COURTS *Louis Boudin*
CONSUMERS COOPERATON: *Benjamin Wolf*
A Neglected Socialist Weapon
FOR A SOCIALIST POLICY IN PALESTINE *Felix Morrow*
AN ARTICLE ON THE C. I. O.
YOUTH, WAR AND THE CAMPAIGN *Al Hamilton*
ANALYSIS OF THE SOVIET RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION

The People's Front in Diapers

Maxwell Harway

That the Communist Party has become a reformist and opportunist party is now a commonplace in radical circles. But that the movement in a rightward direction is continuing and its pace increasing is not so well understood. This mad scramble of the American communist movement in a reformist direction reached a new low at the recent sessions of the American Youth Congress at Cleveland, July 3, 4 and 5th.

At this congress the logical development of the opportunist turn was evidenced in a line-up of the Young Communist League with the Townsend movement, YWCA, and other petty bourgeois organizations against powerful trade unions, the YPSL and other working class organizations. There, a fundamental struggle was conducted between a conception of a united front on specific issues advanced by the labor-socialist bloc and the people's front concept of the YCL.

The American Youth Congress originated in the summer of 1934 as a revolt of progressive organizations against the attempt of Viola Ilma to create a government dominated youth movement. Many important youth organizations were represented in the group that set up the A.Y.C. By the second Congress, however, at Detroit, July, 1935, most of the non-radical youth organizations had dropped out or had become inactive. That congress adopted a Declaration of Rights of American Youth, as an expression of protest against existing conditions and attempted to point the way out for youth.

Shortly afterward, the sixth World Congress of the Young Communist International decided to dissolve the YCL and set up a United Youth League. The American YCL was highly praised for participation in the A.Y.C. and steps were taken to set up similar youth congresses throughout the world. The YCL was interested in creating a "front of the younger generation" to fight the menace of fascism.

When the leaders of the American YCL returned to the United States with the blessings of the Comintern leadership, they began to convert the A.Y.C. into a "young peoples' front" as directed by the resolutions of their congress. Immediately there arose a controversy over the organizational structure of the A.Y.C. The Young People's Socialist League succeeded in having the Youth Congress recognize several important united front principles. "The A.Y.C. is not a membership organization but a federation of organizations", declared the National Council in accepting a document on the purpose of the congress prepared by this writer on behalf of the YPSL. At this time the Youth Congress accepted the principle of decisions by mutual consent of the constituent organizations rather than by a majority vote. Thereupon, the YCL began to press for the publication of a Youth Congress magazine that would appeal to progressive young people. Prevented by the op-

position of the YPSL from creating a political mouthpiece for the congress, the YCL scrapped its own "Young Worker" and issued the "Champion of Youth" as a substitute for the magazine they had proposed to the Youth Congress.

Pushing their campaign, the communists and liberals started to use the Declaration of Rights as a political document. In liberal youth circles the American Youth Congress and the Declaration of Rights became the rallying point for those youth groups and individuals that were seeking political refuge outside of the radical movement. Instead of becoming the rallying point of youth and labor for united front action around immediate problems, the congress became an expression of a liberal political development among youth. The Declaration of Rights became the political expression of many of its adherents. In the minds of many people the A.Y.C. emerged as a political instrument.

Throughout this entire period the Resident Bureau, the final authority in the congress, was made up almost exclusively of socialists and communists. By actual count, voting representatives, at Resident Bureau meetings from October, 1935, to the recent congress numbered 53 communists, representing various organizations, 52 socialists, and 31 representatives of non-radical organizations. It therefore became imperative for the YCL perspective, that affiliation be extended in order to make possible the development of the A.Y.C.

Shortly before the third congress, two departments of the Y.W.C.A. (Business and Professional, and Industrial) affiliated with the Youth Congress. Unable to secure affiliation of the Y.W.C.A. convention, the A.Y.C. strategists took their case to two of the smaller departments whose ranks included a substantial number of Young Communists. Because of the expense of sending delegates to Colorado Springs only a few delegates from these departments were present. The YCL had financed the transportation of a number of delegates and had offered to finance many more, in fact, to such an extent that the national leadership of the Y.W.C.A. was forced to call the attention of their branches to the communist offer, and to urge them not to accept such financial assistance.

When the Third American Youth Congress opened on July 4th, it was apparent that petty bourgeois organizations would dominate it ideologically. Of the eleven hundred delegates about seven or eight hundred were young communists as evidenced by the tremendous ovation given Earl Browder. About one hundred were socialists and trade-unionists and the balance were liberals and church groups. The Townsend movement was represented by spokesmen for its national youth organization. The Y.W.C.A., a Young Democratic club, and other organizations of that character were there to help build a real People's Front in America. As one communist newspaper put it after the congress: "The Townsendites supplied an element which fully rounded the 'Young People's Front' and which delegates welcomed as a major contribution to the Congress."

The tone of the congress was set when Chairman Waldo McNutt, an organizer for the American League Against War and Fascism, representing the non-existing "Kansas Allied Workers," asked the congress to rise and sing "America." Greetings were read from President Roosevelt, and from the Young Democratic League of Pittsburgh. Aubrey Williams, Director of the National Youth Administration, sent a long letter defending his department, and urged the

A.Y.C. to support the administration. Subsequently the congress was subjected to greetings from Democratic Congressman Stephen Young of Ohio who informed the delegates in typical July 4th oratory that Cleveland was one of the great progressive cities of America and explained why youth should support the Democratic administration. Around the hall there hung a number of signs which advised "Develop home markets through the Townsend Plan."

That evening in the political symposium, Earl Browder, and Howard Y. Williams of the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota made indistinguishable speeches. "The issue in this campaign is between fascism and democracy," said Browder. When Roy Burt of the Socialist Party declared that the issue was between Socialism and capitalism, the Daily Worker found it necessary to criticize the "sectarianism" of the S. P.

Everywhere the communists spread reports of socialist sectarianism. The principled position of the YPSL was blamed on the Trotskyites. Anyone who disagreed with the policy of kowtowing to the Y's and the liberals was labeled—"Trotskyite!" A humorous example of this tendency was evinced when a representative of the Townsend groups called Edwin Mitchell, Southern Tenant Farmers' Union delegate, a Trotskyite.

On Sunday, the main fight centered around the Declaration of Rights. The YPSL together with important and substantial trade unions, church, and liberal organization (Local 22, I.L.G.W.U. of N.Y., Local 574 Truck Drivers of Minneapolis, Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, Local 144, I.L.G.W.U., Toledo and Youngstown Central Labor Unions, Detroit, Cleveland, and Toledo Federation of Teachers, National Council of Methodist Youth, Student Council, C.C.N.Y., Chicago Pocketbook Makers Union, Young Circle League of the Workmen's Circle, etc.) presented to the congress a Declaration of Purpose, which they believed to be the only real basis of unity around which the various youth organizations could rally.

The conflict resolved itself into a difference between a genuine united front policy and a policy of political unity on a liberal program. The Declaration of Rights centers the A.Y.C. around pious phrases, defies class divisions, and promotes the idea that youth can obtain peace, freedom, and progress by just getting together. The Declaration of Rights attempts to define what is wrong with the conditions of youth, and in a hazy way to point to their solution. We believed that real unity could not be achieved merely by asking for "peace," for "freedom," but could only be achieved by uniting on such specific issues as the demilitarization of youth, the fight for civil liberties, racial equality, and the American Youth Act.

Unity on the basis of the Declaration of Rights meant disunity since it would be the basis of a liberal program with the inevitable development toward a youth political party. In this division the communist youth became the spearhead of a combination of liberals against socialists and trade unionists. The representative of the Townsend group in these discussions declared, "We stand in full sympathy with this congress as you people (the communists) have been running it." Representatives of trade unions were hissed and jeered, and not permitted to complete their remarks. The delegate from one local of the Mechanics Educational Society told the congress that he would go back to his union and report how he had been treated. The delegate of the Toledo Central Labor Union could not make

himself heard above the confusion of the congress. Murray Gross of Local 22, I.L.G.W.U., was unable to finish his remarks. Led by the Young Communists, a most disgraceful demonstration took place that shocked many of the liberal elements present.

In this atmosphere, the Declaration of Rights of American Youth was readopted. But there was stricken out, upon the insistence of the Y.W.C.A. in the midst of this demonstration, a section which declared "Because we love it (America) so dearly, we demand that it be turned over to the working and farming people of America." The middle class elements were now supreme.

When this job had been done, there remained yet another. Under communist direction a constitution was presented that set up a super-organization more centralized than most of the organizations in the congress. Under this proposed constitution every organization must accept the Declaration of Rights. Every organization must pay a per-capita tax. Prominent individuals without organizational backing would be placed on the National Council. The entire concept of a united front of organizations was scrapped. Against this document the labor-socialist bloc put up a determined fight pointing out that it was the logical outcome of the Declaration of Rights which they had opposed. After jamming through the constitution which included authorization for publication of a magazine, the congress elected a National Council including a large number of communists, plus a number of liberal individuals many of whom were not even present.

The socialist and labor elements refused to accept administrative responsibility in the newly reorganized A.Y.C. When the delegate of Local 22 declined to serve on the National Council, the communist-led crowd cheered the withdrawal of 30,000 dressmakers in another amazing exhibition of anti-labor sentiment. When Edwin Mitchell, Vice-Chairman of the congress, representing the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union asked for the floor, he was cheered. When he announced that his organization of 30,000 sharecroppers could not accept the Declaration of Rights and the constitution and he would not take a post on the National Council he was jeered. A representative of the YPSL expressing basic disagreement with the new policies of the congress, announced that pending a meeting of the National Executive Committee, the YPSL would not serve on the National Council.

When the congress closed it was evident that a new alignment had taken place. The first A.Y.C. was a struggle of left forces against the reactionary right. The third A.Y.C. was a struggle of right wing forces and the communists against the labor and socialist movement. And this realignment in the youth field will probably be followed by similar developments elsewhere.

In its present form the A.Y.C. is doomed to sterility as an effective united front instrument whatever its successes may be otherwise. It is still not too late for the real leaders of the Youth Congress to retrace their steps and make possible effective united front action between youth and labor around specific issues. If not, the leaders of responsible youth organizations will have to create new instruments to bring about that unity of action which alone can be an effective instrument in the struggles of youth for better living conditions.

Socialists and the Coming War

James Burnham

AT the present time, the question of war is the decisive question. It is decisive in determining the long range perspectives of the imperialist governments; decisive in directing the policies of the Soviet Union; and decisive, likewise, in motivating the differentiations and regroupments within the labor movement.

Within the working class, the question of war cuts across the complex ideological and organizational divisions. The harsh process of sifting, gradually but inexorably divides the political forces of the working class into the two finally opposing camps: those who are for the war, and those who are against it. In the end, as sharp, as crude, as clear as that—*for* or *against* the war.

But the correct answer to the issue of war does not spring Minerva-like from the heads of a leadership on the day that war is declared. It is prepared for, step by step, by the action and education of the preceding years. And on this question, more perhaps than on any other, absolute clarity is both most necessary and most difficult to obtain. Those who are or will be for the war are never open in their support, but always mask their betrayal behind a deceptive and persuasive veil. We are, of course, not for the war, they say, but against German militarism or Russian Tsarism. Or so they said in 1914. Today different phrases are needed to hide the same betrayal. We are not for the war, but we must uphold the League or neutrality or collective action against an aggressor, or defend the Soviet Union, or protect democratic against fascist states.

It is this deceptiveness of betrayal on the question of war that makes clarity so essential, and that condemns at once any attempt to equivocate or to hide. On the question of war we must speak the exact and whole truth.

The place of the question of war in the present period gives paramount importance to the resolution on war adopted at Cleveland. The circumstances of the convention, unhappily, prevented its discussion from the floor. All the more reason, therefore, why it must become the basis for the most widespread analysis, criticism and discussion within the press and the ranks of the party.

The resolution is the outstanding theoretic achievement of the convention. Its foundation is firm: the rejection of the idea that war is an "exceptional event," and the assertion that it is an inherent part of capitalist-nationalism. From this follows at once the conclusion that the only genuine struggle against war is the struggle against capitalism and for Socialism. This conclusion is, indeed, the heart of a correct position on war; if its implications are carried out rigidly and explicitly, the full Marxist position necessarily follows.

The resolution, furthermore, goes a greater distance than ever before in the history of the party in defining the Marxist policy with reference to the wars for liberation of colonial and sub-

ject peoples and nations. Entirely correctly, the resolution declares for the support of such wars, since they are directed against world imperialism; and it likewise points out that in these colonial wars it is only the working class of the imperialist nations which can be the true ally of the subject nations.

The resolution, likewise, criticizes and condemns a number of the chief forms which betrayal on the question of war assumes at the present time. It repudiates the treacherous support of the "sanctions" of capitalist governments—support which means and can only mean support of the war policies of those governments. After a brief but on the whole careful analysis of the relation between fascism and war, the resolution rejects the fatal doctrine that democratic capitalist states should be supported against fascist states. There is, again, a paragraph critical of the communist doctrine that "defense of the Soviet Union" means defense of the capitalist states allied with the Soviet Union.

In spite of these excellences, however, there is more than one grave weakness in the resolution. These weaknesses are of two kinds: ambiguities in what is said, and omissions of what should and must be said.

The ambiguities in the resolution can be illustrated from a number of paragraphs. For example, the collapse of the League of Nations is correctly noted; but no complete conclusion concerning the League—other than the sufficiently obvious fact that the League cannot stop war—is drawn. Thus the resolution would permit the belief (widespread generally, and with adherents even in the party) that the League, though not enough in itself to "solve" the question of war, should yet be clung to for what positive aid it can bring; should, perhaps, be "reformed," etc. An entirely different conclusion actually derives from the correct analysis of the League. The League is nothing else than the instrument of the dominant imperialist powers, one of their agents in working out their policies, which are, all of them, war policies. The duty of socialists, therefore, is not to try to patch up and reform the League—a task on the face of it utopian and absurd—but to expose it for what it is before the masses, to try to break the hold of the delusions—carefully fostered by the capitalist governments—concerning it.

The paragraph on the Soviet Union, again, is ambiguous. The defense of the Soviet Union, the resolution says, "can only be a proletarian defense." But in what does a proletarian defense consist? The social-patriotic policy of the Comintern, preparing to recruit the workers into the imperialist armies of the allies of the Soviet Union, also masquerades as a "proletarian defense." The answer must be put squarely, not dodged around with a weasel phrase: In the last analysis, the only defense of the Soviet Union is the extension of the workers' revolution to the capitalist nations; within any imperialist nation, the workers of that nation can defend the Soviet Union only by struggling *against* "their own" government, by overthrowing it, and by taking power. And this method of defense holds, not less, but *above all* in the case of war.

There are other ambiguities, as in the loose reference to the "general strike." But the major omissions are more evident than the ambiguities.

First and central of the omissions in the resolution is the lack of any explicit analysis of pacifism.

Pacifism may be defined in general as the conception of the struggle against war as a "fight for peace" independent of the class struggle for workers' power.

Pacifism, that is to say, lifts war out of its concrete historical context, views it as a thing apart from the relations of cause and effect, and thus looks on the struggle against war as supra-class and supra-historical. Pacifist ideologies of all sorts—from the American League Against War and Fascism type to "conscientious objection"—are extremely widespread. Pacifism, moreover, pervades all classes, and is even the "official" doctrine of governments—including, from their different points of view, the governments of the Soviet Union and the United States. So powerful an influence cannot possibly be overlooked in the formulation of a position on war. Pacifism must be analyzed and estimated correctly, and an attitude toward it is established.

Pacifism is a peculiarly touchy problem for many socialists, primarily for certain moral and sentimental reasons. Many pacifists are so undoubtedly sincere; some—such as "conscientious objectors"—are so self-sacrificing and truly noble from a personal point of view, that critical analysis of their ideas and actions seems often a desecration. At least, we think, if we cannot agree with pacifists, we would nevertheless like to regard them as somehow friends and allies in the struggle.

Whatever the apparent moral and sentimental feelings, however, Marxists must first of all face the truth. How much evil, after all, has been done with a sincere heart! There are sincere fascists and bankers and generals, as well as sincere pacifists, to reckon with.

And the truth is that pacifism is neither friend nor ally in the revolutionary struggle against war; but, on the contrary, a subtle and dangerous enemy. This is proved by every lesson of experience and theory.

It is not hard to see why. In the first place, at its best pacifism is wholly impotent in the struggle against war. The Cleveland resolution gives the basis for the explanation: the only genuine struggle against war is the struggle against the causes of war—that is, the class struggle against capitalism, for workers' power and Socialism. Since pacifism divorces the struggle against war from the class struggle, it leaves the causes of war untouched, and is consequently powerless to prevent war, which like all other natural events follows necessarily from its causes.

But its impotence is the least of the charges against pacifism. By organizing and propagandizing an entirely false course in the struggle against war, pacifism hides the true nature of war, its actual causes; it promotes hopeless illusions concerning the problem of war; and it dissipates the energies of the masses by turning them aside from the only genuine struggle against war—the class struggle for socialism—into "harmless" (for the war-makers) and meaningless channels.

Pacifism, moreover, thus acts as a cover for the war preparations of the imperialists, who readily adopt pacifist phrases, the better to pursue their military aims in action. (No country illustrates this more blatantly than the United States, where every increase in armament and every move toward war has always been clothed in the smuggest lip service to peace.) The masses are thereby lulled into a false security which leaves them helpless before the sudden impact of the war itself. Lenin summed up pacifism pungently and adequately when he wrote, "Pacifism is the hypocritical cloak of imperialism."

Still more deadly is the ease with which pacifism, when confronted with the actuality of war, passes over into social-patriotism and betrayal to the war. This

was amply proved in 1914, and again demonstrated during the past year. It is habitual for the pacifist to be against war "in general;" but to find, somehow, that he is *for* any particular, given war. And this is only natural, since his whole analysis of war is wrong. He is against war in general, but for the war to end wars, the war to uphold civilization against barbarism, to maintain the principles of the League; or even, by ironic paradox, the war to preserve peace (on which basis many English pacifists were willing to go to war against Italy). There is always a suitable rationalization. And we find that the prominent pacifist leaders, and the great pacifist organizations become, once the war starts, the most effective recruiting grounds for the army. The moral prestige of their previous stand "against war" is utilized to make the particular actual war acceptable to their following. If these fighters for peace, reason the followers, consider this war justified, it must be so. And they sign up to the tune of the most worthy sentiments and ideals.

But if this account of the nature of pacifism is true—and it is unquestionably true—socialists can neither tolerate nor remain indifferent to pacifism and pacifist ideas. On the contrary, it is the duty of socialists to attack pacifism sharply and uncompromisingly, to expose is fatal illusions and its false perspectives, to root out its influence over the masses. And it is the first duty of left-wing socialists to clarify the party membership itself as to the role of pacifism, to carry on an educational work which will leave no room for ideas so futile and so dangerous in the socialist struggle against imperialist war. Pacifism, unresisted, can suffocate the genuine struggle against war; it must be fought against and conquered.

A second omission in the Cleveland resolution is as obvious and as incorrect as the omission of any reference to pacifism. This second omission, moreover, tends to give an abstract and somewhat academic air to the resolution as a whole.

The resolution states many important and true points about the nature of war and the struggle against it; the resolution attacks many false conceptions of the struggle against war—in general, and specifically in connection with the League, sanctions, democracy and fascism, the Soviet Union, and "neutrality." But nowhere does the resolution state where the false ideas which it attacks are to be found; nowhere does it name by name the individuals and organizations which propagate these false ideas.

But neither the progress toward war, nor the struggle against it, proceeds in a vacuum. These false ideas do not float around in a Platonic heaven—nor, if they did, would they be of importance or danger. No: these false ideas, these preparations for betrayal to the war, are vigorously and systematically propagated by influential individuals and powerful organizations. The struggle against these ideas and this betrayal cannot be conceived, except by vicious abstraction, apart from the struggle against the individuals and organizations whose ideas they are. Socialists are not arm-chair theorists, engaged in polite arguments about phrases. Their place is in the historical world, in the concrete clash of human and social forces. They cannot, therefore, be content with "exposing" an abstraction; they must fight against the persons and groups which give the abstraction concrete reality. Otherwise they have not taken a single step in the actual struggle.

Who is it who betrays the struggle against war by fostering illusions about the League, by advocating sanctions, by perverting the conception of the defense

of the Soviet Union, by calling for the support of democratic capitalist nations in a war against fascist nations, by spreading the ideas of pacifism? We know the answer: and we must state the answer, openly and explicitly. Some of these ideas are the stock-in-trade of bourgeois organizations and individuals like World Peaceways or the International Women's League for Peace and Freedom or Senator Nye or the Church groups. We must therefore criticize, attack and expose these organizations. But these are not the most dangerous. It is the propagation of these ideas from within the working class that holds the greatest dangers. And within the working class we find these ideas put forward intransigently by, in the first place, the Waldmans and Oneals and their reformist counterparts throughout the world. We must label these people, and warn against them.

We find that, in their most degraded and insidious form, they are the rallying cries of the Communist International and its sections and affiliated organizations everywhere. The line of the Comintern is the line of betrayal to the coming war. Of this there can be no doubt, by the very terms and analysis of the Cleveland resolution. Here also we must name names. Our opposition to the Communist Party cannot be based upon memories of past impoliteness; in the present period it is based above all on the fact that the Communist Party is a social-patriotic organization, actively preparing the betrayal to the coming war. Similarly, we cannot be content, like the Lovestonites, to oppose the American League Against War and Fascism because it has not yet been blessed by the trade union bureaucrats. Our opposition must be based on fundamental political considerations: on the fact that the American League, guided by the Communist Party, agitates and organizes a brew of pacifist and social-patriotic treachery. It is in no sense an ally, in every sense an enemy, in the struggle against war. And here also we must say openly what we mean and what we believe.

Can we remain silent at the policy pursued by the British Labor Party during the Ethiopian affair? Or the position taken by the leadership of the Socialist and Labor International (from its formulation in August, 1935)? This would be mere hypocrisy, when the policy itself is so sharply condemned in the resolution adopted by the party. Can we ignore the fact that the coalition government in France maintains the two year law, keeps up the armament expenditures, increases the strength of the forts, does nothing to withdraw French colonial armed oppression? If we do, what confidence can we deserve from the workers, who will in time learn from history and experience the meaning and results of these policies? We must tell the truth. This is the only possible basis for the politics of revolutionary Socialism. The struggle against war, which is nothing else than the class struggle, cannot, alas, be fought with kid gloves and polite gestures. It is, indeed, "the final conflict." And it must be fought in the light and after the manner of this understanding.

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

On Reading Trotsky's Book "The Third International After Lenin"

Haim Kantorovitch

THE book was written at the time of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, that is, 1928, before the third period madness, before the capitulation of the German Communist Party, and of course before the full liquidation of Communism at the Seventh Congress. Yet, one who has read Trotsky's criticism of the program of the C. I. could foresee the further development of Stalinist Communism all through the third period to the Seventh Congress.

Trotsky does not indulge in prophecies (p. 137) but his analysis of the mistakes of the C. I. clearly indicates its further development.

The downfall of the C. I. is the result of the theory of "Socialism in one country." It is contrary to all communist theory and tactics. Once this theory is accepted, it leads necessarily towards "a collaborationist policy towards the foreign bourgeoisie with the object of averting intervention." Since this theory is accepted not only by the leaders of the U.S.S.R., who could at least plead national emergency as cause or excuse for their betrayal of internationalism, but also by the Communist International, its only excuse can be the "defense of the Soviet Union," using the word "defense" in the simple traditional way in which it is used in every capitalist state. Where does it lead? In 1928 Trotsky prophesied that in view of this theory, "The task of the parties in the C. I. assumes therefore an auxiliary character. Their mission is to protect the U.S.S.R. from intervention and not to fight for the conquest of power." (p. 61)

He clearly foresaw the fate that was in store for the C. I. as an organization. Once this theory is accepted "Then the international is partly a subsidiary and partly a decorative institution, the congress of which can be convoked every four years, once every ten years or perhaps not at all. . . . The International according to this scheme must play the role of a *pacifist* instrument. Its main role, the role of an instrument of world revolution, is then inevitably relegated to the background." (p. 62)

In 1928 it was easy to raise the cry that Trotsky was slandering the C. I. and the communist movement generally. In 1936 no one but a blind man can deny that Trotsky's predictions came true to the letter. The C. I. has become nothing more than a subsidiary of the foreign office of the Soviet government, a pacifist instrument. Its congresses are convoked once in four years and once in seven years, and God knows when the Eighth Congress will be held, if ever. The communist parties have even gone further in their degeneration than Trotsky predicted. It is not only that they have relegated the idea of world revolution to the background; they have

given it up completely. Along with the world revolution went the class-struggle.

His criticism of the mistakes and vacillations of the C. I. is brilliant and well substantiated. The implications, however, that if not for these mistakes, the failures of the proletarian revolution would have been victories, is not convincing. He places altogether too much reliance on leadership. There seems to be something divine about true, real leaders; all defeats of the European working-class were mainly due to the lack of leadership. Yet some of the worst defeats suffered by the communist movement happened at the time when the C. I. was headed by Lenin and Trotsky, and the opposition in the C.P.U.S.S.R. was defeated, though at its head was no less a leader than Trotsky himself!

No one will of course deny the true role of leadership. We all know the price many a party has paid for incorrect leadership. Yet, leaders do not create parties and certainly make no revolutions, though correct leadership is of course necessary in order to utilize and take advantage of favorable situations. According to Trotsky, leadership is of first importance, everything else secondary. "Would we have seized power in October had not Lenin arrived in Russia in time?" Trotsky asks and answers "There is much to indicate that we might not have been able to seize power." (p. 85) Let us however ask the same question differently: Would the proletarian revolution have triumphed in Germany if it had had Lenin as its leader? From all we know about the German situation at the time of the revolution, the answer must be in the negative. No, Lenin would have been defeated just as Liebknecht and Luxemburg were. Why did Liebknecht and Luxemburg fail? Not because they were bad leaders, but because the German masses did not follow them. The German masses followed the Social Democratic Party, which was bent on liquidating revolution instead of deepening it, and Lenin could have done under these circumstances no more than Liebknecht did. Or, let us apply the same question to England. Suppose Lenin would have been in England during the time of the general strike—could he have turned it into a social revolution? One must have an exceedingly rich imagination to believe this. One may say, it is the fault of the German S.D.P., of the British L.P., etc. Admitted. But taking the situations as they were, could a Lenin have changed it? The answer is evident, he could not.

"To lead is to foresee," Trotsky declares. Applied to the two greatest leaders, Lenin as well as Trotsky, there can be no doubt that both are guilty of often, too often, "foreseeing" wrongly; often, too often, mistaking their own subjective wishes for objective foreseeing. They both foresaw a world revolution which has not come; wars, intervention, and crises that failed to materialize. They even foresaw inevitable disaster for the Soviet Union if the world revolution did not come soon enough, a "foreseeing" that fortunately was wrong, knowing well enough that the victory of the proletariat was not possible without a well organized, well prepared revolutionary party. Trotsky "foresaw," as he admits, that such parties would be created, and in the fire of revolution and civil war mature rapidly and be able to lead the proletariat in its great "final

---

In "Soviet Communism" by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, one reads: "The supreme authority rests . . . with the world congress, meeting every two to four or seven years," thus giving the impression that it is part of the C. I. program to meet every two to four or seven years. Which is of course not true. (Vol. I p. 409) The book is full of just such "authoritative" information.

battle" against capitalism. That was of course pure wishful thinking.

Revolutionary parties of this caliber do not spring up and mature rapidly within a few months or a year. They grow up slowly and gather strength from their own experiences and wisdom; from their own failures. Yet, Trotsky based his entire strategy at one time on this false belief. In 1928 Trotsky foresaw that "the Communist International will not survive five years more of similar mistakes, but if the Comintern crumbles, neither will the U.S.S.R. long endure." (p. 255-56.) It seems to us in 1936 that he "foresaw" wrongly again. In 1928 Trotsky foresaw that the workers would "begin to pass *en masse* from Social Democracy to the Communist Party" and he assures us that "the arrival of such a moment is inevitable." (p. 262) But in 1936, it seems again that he made a mistake. Instead of the workers passing *en masse* from the socialist to the communist parties, the followers of Trotsky are joining *en masse* the existing socialist parties.

And yet, in spite of the many mistakes that Trotsky has made, in spite of his serious mistakes in estimating objective situations and therefore drawing wrong conclusions, (something of which not only Lenin, but also Marx and Engels were equally guilty) Trotsky is a great leader. But the presence of a Trotsky or a Lenin, or many Trotskys and Lenins is no guarantee for a successful revolution, just as their absence does not necessarily mean failure. It is this exaggeration of the role of the leader that is really the basis of the worst features of Stalinism. The entire disgusting system of the "beloved leaders" from Stalin to Browder, which has reduced the communist parties to mechanical automatons that are capable of nothing else than becoming enthusiastic when ordered, is the practical application of this theory.

Brilliantly and convincingly, Trotsky shows that Stalinism is nothing but a perversion of Leninism. In fact, it is its opposite. The victory of Stalinism is the defeat of Leninism. Leninism has been abandoned by the Russian Communist Party and following it, by the entire Stalinist International. In vain will the reader, however, look to Trotsky for an explanation of how it happened. Leninism has been abandoned. True. But was it because Stalin is a bad man? A traitor? Trotsky himself spurns such a "simple" explanation. What then conditioned the defeat of Leninism? Trotsky really has no answer to it. He can't have an answer. He *is* a Leninist, and the sad truth, which Trotsky will not admit is that Leninism failed because the subsequent developments of the Russian, as well as the world revolution, have shown it to be wrong.

The basic idea of Lenin (and of Trotsky) on the Russian revolution was that Russia was not only not ripe for Socialism, it was not even ripe for a socialist revolution. But he firmly believed that Europe was ripe for the revolution. The Russian revolution was to be only the signal for the world revolution. "It was clear to us," Lenin declared in 1921, "that without aid from the international world revolution, a victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible. Even prior to the revolution as well as after it, we thought that the revolution will also occur, either immediately or at least *very soon* in other backward countries, and in the more highly developed countries; *otherwise we would perish.*"

Lenin never tired of repeating his formula—either a world revolution or we perish. His conviction was based not only on his belief that Socialism in one country, and a most backward coun-

try at that, was not possible, but also on his belief that if the world revolution did not destroy the capitalist states of other countries, these states would never tolerate the existence of Soviet Russia for any length of time. "We do not live merely in a state," Lenin reasoned, "but in a system of states and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states *for any length of time* is inconceivable." And on another occasion Lenin assures us that "as long as capitalism and Socialism remain side by side, we cannot live peacefully—the one or the other will be victor in the end. An obituary will be sung either over the death of world capitalism or the death of the Soviet Republic." (quoted by Trotsky.) It was either a world revolution or war against Soviet Russia, one of the two had to happen. The tactics and strategy of the Soviet Government as well as of the Comintern were based on this belief.

Years passed. The prospect of a world revolution grew dimmer and dimmer. The revolutionary movement suffered defeat after defeat. It became clear that it would take a long time before the world revolution would come. But neither did the prophesied war of intervention come. The communist press, it is true, every day uncovered plots for such intervention. But still the war of intervention did not come off. The imperialist states had plenty of troubles of their own. Instead of making war on Soviet Russia, they saw it as a good customer; they wanted to do business with it.

Meanwhile Russia had to live. It could not go on living simply in the hope of world revolution or fear of capitalist intervention. The Russian people wanted rest and peace, even if they could not as yet have enough bread. The Soviet government had to turn more and more to domestic problems. Life itself forced on it the gigantic constructive plans of which it is now so proud. But for its constructive work it needed the help of exactly those imperialist states, whose very existence side by side with the Soviet government, according to Lenin, was impossible. The Soviet government had to enter into new relations with the capitalist states, business relations, friendly relations. The old tactic of pure hostility, of inciting revolution had to be scrapped, if normal business relations were to be established. Old Leninism was in the way and it also had to be scrapped. Soviet Russia had to find a place for itself among capitalist nations, it had to find allies for itself among them. It succeeded, but had to pay the price. That price was Leninism and revolutionary internationalism, generally. The victory of Stalinism was the defeat of world revolution. But this defeat was not the result of Stalinism; it was its cause.

The tragedy of the Communist International is that when Soviet Russia was compelled, in the interests of its national state, to abandon revolutionary Communism, it could not disassociate itself from Stalinism, and continue its own independent life as a revolutionary international. It became nothing more than a cog in the Stalinist machine and an instrument of bourgeois pacificism and people's front class-collaborationism, instead of an instrument for world revolution. But then, the Comintern, as well as the communist national sections everywhere, were always nothing but subsidiaries of the Soviet government. They could not according to their tradition be anything else.

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AFTER LENIN

by Leon Trotsky Pioneer Publishers, N. Y., $2.00.